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5 of 5

CLAREMONT
SANTACRUZ
FERNANDEZ

X-MEN
DIE BY THE SWORD



RATED A



\$2.99 US \$3.05 CAN

DIRECT EDITION

EXCALIBUR

PROTECTORS OF THE BRITISH ISLES:



CAPTAIN BRITAIN



PETE WISDOM



SAGE



DAZZLER



NOCTURNE

EXILES

PROTECTORS OF THE OMNIVERSE:



BLAINE



SABRETOOTH



MORT



PSYLOCKE



LONGSHOT



SHADOWCAT



MYSTIC



ROGUE



THUNDERBOLT

FRIENDS AND FOES



MERLYN



JASPERS



THE FURY



ALBION



ROMA



SATURNYNE

Previously...

Things have not gone according to plan for **Excalibur** and the **Exiles**. What began as a pleasant meeting between the two groups turned sour when the mysterious **Rouge-Mort** attacked and hospitalized **Captain Britain**. Meanwhile, **Sir Jim Jaspers**, powerful reality-warping lunatic, led an attack on **Roma's** Starlight Citadel and the **Captain Britain Corps**. Both attacks were orchestrated by **Roma's** father, **Merlyn**, dead set on getting revenge on his daughter for usurping his position as Celestial Guardian. Unfortunately, no one realized until far too late that **Jaspers** carried within him a piece of the unrelenting killing machine, **The Fury** – a piece that wanted out.

Our two teams of heroes find themselves caught in the middle of this mess, with few options and little time. **Rouge-Mort** has been defeated, but not before putting a sword through **Roma's** chest. To combat **Jaspers**, they've enlisted renegade **Corps** recruit **Albion**, but even with his help, countless captains have fallen. Just when things look darkest, as **Jim Jaspers** is completely overtaken by **The Fury**, a ray of hope shines through as **Captain Britain**, healed from his wounds, joins the fight.

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NOT SO LONG AGO,
IN THE CELESTIAL
SCHEME OF THINGS,
THE FURY WAS
CREATED.

INTENDED AS THE ULTIMATE
KILLING MACHINE, IT LEARNED
FROM EVERY ENCOUNTER, IT
COULD NEVER BE BEATEN
THE SAME WAY TWICE.

ITS CREATORS FIGURED THEY'D
THOUGHT OF EVERYTHING,
INCLUDING PRIMAL SAFEGUARDS
TO GUARANTEE IT COULD NEVER
REBEL AGAINST THEM.

SADLY, THEY NEVER
IMAGINED THAT THEIR
SPECIES, THEIR WORLD,
THEIR ENTIRE DIMENSION
WOULD BE ERASED
FROM EXISTENCE.

ONLY
THE FURY
SURVIVED.

UNTIL IT WAS BELIEVED
DESTROYED BY
CAPTAIN BRITAIN
AND CAPTAIN U.K.

SEEMINGLY,
HOWEVER, THE SAME
PAN-DIMENSIONAL FORCE
THAT RESURRECTED
JAMES JASPERS
NOT SO LONG AGO...

BUT
THAT'S WHAT
HAPPENED.

—ALSO DID THE SAME
FOR THE FURY; HIDDEN
WITHIN THE HEART OF HIS
PHYSICAL BEING.

NOW, WITH
JASPERS' EXISTENCE IN
JEOPARDY, THE FURY
HAS AWAKENED...

—AND IS NOW IN THE
PROCESS OF FULLY
MANIFESTING
ITSELF.

DAWN OF A NEW DAY?

by Chris Claremont & Juan Santacruz

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NOT
SO FAST,
MONSTER.

YOU'VE
HAD YOUR
LIFE--

--AND THE
SLAUGHTER
OF COUNTLESS
INNOCENTS AND
HEROES TO
SHOW FOR IT--

--I'M
NOT ABOUT
TO GIVE YOU
A SECOND
CHANCE!



IT'S OFF-
BALANCE.

FOCUSED AS
MUCH ON ITS RE-
CONSTRUCTION
AS ON ITS
DEFENSE.



I'LL NEVER
HAVE A BETTER
CHANCE TO TAKE
IT DOWN.



THIS ISN'T
GOOD.

BLOODY
THING'S CAUGHT
MY HAND!



ITS
SYSTEMS ARE
BACK ON-
LINE--

UNKGH!

BRIAN'S BEING
SLAUGHTERED--!

STAND
YOUR GROUND,
MACQUILLAN!

SATURNYNE,
WE'VE GOT TO
HELP!

THIS IS
BRIAN'S
MOMENT, FOR
BETTER OR
WORSE--

IF BRIAN
FAILS--IF HE
FALLS--

--THERE
WON'T BE
ANY BLOODY
"NEXT."

WE WAIT,
AND WATCH, AND
BY ALL MEANS,
PRAY!

--BUT WE
HAVE TO THINK
ABOUT WHAT
HAPPENS
NEXT.

WE'LL ACT
WHEN WE HAVE
TO. ANYTHING LESS
MAKES A MOCKERY
OF THOSE WHO'VE
ALREADY DIED.

DON'T LET
IT GO THAT FAR,
BRADDOCK.

JUSTIFY ROMA'S
FAITH IN YOU--AND
MACQUILLAN'S--

--AND
MINE.

SEND THIS
MONSTER BACK TO
THE HELL THAT
SPAWNED IT.

FOOM!

Morph, a muscular man in a black and white suit with a mask, is shown in a dynamic pose, lunging forward with his right arm extended. He is surrounded by debris and motion lines, suggesting a high-speed action scene.

THE FIRST
TIME THEY
FOUGHT...

Morph is engaged in a close-quarters battle with a large, bulky enemy. The enemy is wearing a helmet and has a large, rounded body. Morph is using his strength to push or throw the enemy. The background is dark and filled with debris.

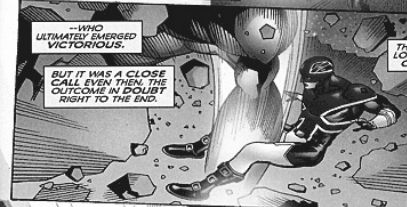
...ALL BRIAN SEEMED ABLE TO
DO WAS GET HIMSELF BEATEN
BLOODY AND THEN KILLED.

...THE FURY
WAS LIKE A
FORCE OF
NATURE.

MERLYN
BROUGHT HIM
BACK TO LIFE.

FOR ALL HIS
STRENGTH, FOR
ALL HIS SKILL...

AND WHEN NEXT BRIAN FACED
THE FURY, IT WAS HE—WITH THE AID
OF LINDA MACQUILLAN—

Morph is running through a field of debris and rubble. He is looking back over his shoulder, suggesting he is being pursued or is checking on someone behind him. The ground is cracked and broken.

—WHO
ULTIMATELY EMERGED
VICTORIOUS.

BUT IT WAS A CLOSE
CALL EVEN THEN, THE
OUTCOME IN DOUBT
RIGHT TO THE END.

THIS BATTLE
LOOKS EVEN
CLOSER.

A group of characters are in a battle. Morph is in the foreground, looking towards the right. Behind him are several other characters, some of whom are wearing helmets. They are all in dynamic poses, suggesting a chaotic battle scene.

LET'S GET IN THERE,
GUYS, BEFORE CAPTAIN
BRIAN GETS HIMSELF
SLAUGHTERED!

Morph is in a battle, surrounded by other characters. He is looking towards the right, and there is a lot of action and debris around him. The scene is very dynamic and intense.

EVEN AS MORPH SPEAKS,
EVEN AS HE BEGINS TO TAKE
THAT FIRST, FATEFUL STEP...

...THE SITUATION
GOES FROM BAD...

...TO WORSE.

BRACKA
KASH



NO, MORPH, WE CAN'T.

POWERFUL AS WE ARE, LOOK AT WHAT JUST HAPPENED.

THOSE TWO OUT THERE ARE WAY OUT OF OUR LEAGUE--WHICH MEANS WE CAN'T JUST REACT.



WE HAVE TO THINK.

OKAY, CLARICE--SO TELL US WHAT YOU'RE THINKING SEEMS LIKE YOU'VE GOT YOURSELF A PLAN.



I HAVE AN INSTINCT, MR. CREED--

--AND IT'S SOMETHING ONLY I CAN DO.

I CAN'T REALLY EXPLAIN, GUYS, I CAN ONLY ASK THAT YOU ALL TRUST ME.



KEEP YOUR FINGERS CROSSED.



TOSS ME A PRAYER, EVEN.



LOOK AFTER OUR "FAMILY," MR. CREED--

--AND PLEASE KEEP AN EYE ON ALBION. I'M STILL NOT SURE I TRUST HIM.



BUNK



ROMA--

--HOW
BADLY
ARE YOU
HURT?

I SUSPECT
SAGE...

...BETTER.

...I'VE
BEEN...

IS THERE AN
INFIRMARY IN
THIS PALACE?

TELL
ME...

...WHAT'S
HAPPENING...

...OUTSIDE.



I'M TRYING
TO HELP YOU,
WOMAN.

THEN--
DO AS I
ASK.

I SEE CAPTAIN
BRITAIN--BETSY'S
BROTHER--

--FIGHTING--

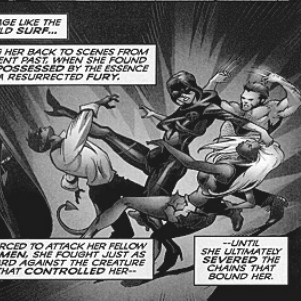
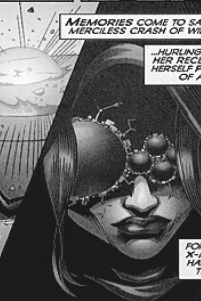


--WHAT'S
HAPPENED TO
JASPER--

--OH,
NO!

MEMORIES COME TO SAGE LIKE THE
MERCILESS CRASH OF WILD SURF...

--HURLING HER BACK TO SCENES FROM
HER RECENT PAST WHEN SHE FOUND
HERSELF POSSESSED BY THE ESSENCE
OF A RESURRECTED FURY.



FORCED TO ATTACK HER FELLOW
X-MEN, SHE FOUGHT JUST AS
HARD AGAINST THE CREATURE
THAT CONTROLLED HER--

--UNTIL
SHE ULTIMATELY
SEVERED THE
CHAINS THAT
BOUND HER.

THIS TIME,
HOWEVER, SHE
MAY NOT BE
SO LUCKY.



ROMA--
WHAT ARE YOU
DOING?!

WHAT I
MUST.



I'M SORRY
I'M SORRY I'M
SORRY I'M
SORRY--

I TRULY
WISH THERE WAS
SOME BETTER
WAY.



THAT SCREAM--

--IT DOESN'T SOUND LIKE MY DAUGHTER...

...BUT SOMETHING TELLS ME SHE'S INVOLVED!

DAMN THE WRETCHED BRAT--

--SHE'S ALTERED THE CORE STRUCTURE OF THE CITADEL TO INHIBIT THE EFFECTIVENESS OF MY PSYCHIC POWERS.

WHAT'S THIS--

--SOMEONE'S DENIED ME MY RIGHTEOUS PRIZE!

I'M NOT QUITE DEAD, FATHER.

I SAVED THE LAST MOMENT FOR YOU.

WHATEVER HAPPENS TO ME, YOUR CAUSE IS LOST.

DEFIANT TO THE END, AND NO LESS A FOOL.

HORRID CHILD, YOUR WORDS MEAN NOTHING.

YOU NEVER HAD ANY HOPE OF VICTORY.

THE ULTIMATE VICTORY WILL BE MINE.

AND ONCE I'VE CLAIMED THE KNOWLEDGE THAT WAS IN YOUR BRAIN...

...SO, TOO, WILL BE THE FUTURE!



WHAT MAKES YOU THINK YOU EVEN HAVE A FUTURE, MERLYN?

WHOOP!

BRIAN'S SISTER.

YOU HIT ME!

YOU'VE--
BROKEN MY FLESH.
I CAN ACTUALLY
TASTE MY OWN BLOOD.

GET USED TO IT.
THERE'S A WHOLE LOT MORE TO COME.

HOW DARE YOU!



STRUCK
A NERVE
HAVE I?

LET ME
GUESS: YOU'RE THE
KIND, LOVES TO
SET EVENTS IN
MOTION...

...BUT
CAN'T ABIDE
THE DETAILS.
YES?



LET THE
PEONS SHED
THE BLOOD, IS
THAT IT?

YOU COME
ALONG *AFTER*
THE FACT TO
COLLECT THE
SPOILS?

SORRY--
BUT THINGS
DON'T WORK
LIKE THAT.

PRIZES LIKE
THESE HAVE TO
BE *EARNED*.



YOU HAVE
TO PROVE
YOURSELF
WORTHY.



AND IT SEEMS
TO ME, YOU'RE
NOT EVEN
CLOSE.

THAK





NOT
GOOD, NOT
GOOD!

THE
HARDER
I HIT THE
FURY--

--THE
MORE QUICKLY IT
RECOVERS.



CARE FOR
SOME HELP,
CAPTAIN?



AT
THIS POINT,
GLADLY.

WHAT
KEEPT
YOU?



I WANTED
TO LET YOU
CLAIM THE
GLORY--

--AND SEE
PRECISELY WHAT
I WAS UP
AGAINST.



CONSIDER THIS,
THE ULTIMATE
KILLING
MACHINE.

SEE
HOW QUICKLY
IT HEALS
ITSELF.

BUT RIGHT
NOW--

--FOR
THIS FLEETING
MOMENT--



--IT'S
VULNERABLE.

THIS IS
WHAT I WAS
HOPING
FOR.



ARE YOU
MAD, WOMAN?
WHAT CAN YOU
DO?

ONLY
FRACTIONS
OF AN INSTANT
TO MAKE MY
MOVE.



NO
HESITATION.



NO
MISTAKES!

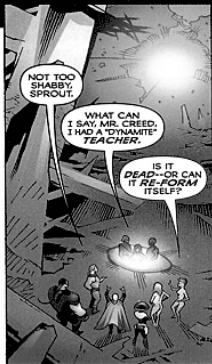


WE HAVE
TO GET HER
OUT OF
THERE!

I CAN
DO THAT,
CAPTAIN.



BLINK







WE'D
BEST START
LOOKING FOR
OUR OWN?

WHO'S
MISSING?

ROMA--
SAGE--



"--DAZZLER--
AND LONGSHOT!"

ALISON?



OPEN
YOUR EYES, MY
DAZZLER.

PLEASE?

I FEEL
LIKE WE'VE BEEN
LOST FOR SO
LONG.



I JUST WANT
TO MAKE SURE
THIS ISN'T SOME
DREAM.

LONGSHOT?

YOU--
REMEMBER?



NOT
EVERYTHING.

NOT
YET.

JUST THE
THINGS THAT ARE
IMPORTANT.



I'VE DREAMT FOR YEARS OF THIS MOMENT. NOW I'D FEEL WHAT I'D DO, WHEN I FINALLY ACHIEVED MY REVENGE.

NOW IT SEEMS THE JOKE'S ON US BOTH.

ROMA'S DEAD, THE CORPS IS NEAR TO ANNIHILATED--

--YET THE OMNIVERSE STILL NEEDS ITS CHAMPIONS.

HARD AS IT MAY SEEM, WE'LL SIMPLY HAVE TO START AGAIN.

NOT WITH YOU, BRIAN.

I WANT ALBION TO LEAD THE NEW CORPS.

TIMES HAVE CHANGED, A HARDER DAY HAS DAWNED.

WE NEED A FULL-TIME LEADER WHO'S MORE SUITED TO DEALING WITH THESE KINDS OF THREATS.

I'M TRULY SORRY--



--BUT I FEEL THAT ALBION IS BETTER-SUITED TO THIS NEW REALITY...

...AND THE BATTLES TO COME.



ALSO, YOUR HOME-WORLD IS JUST TOO DANGEROUS.

BETTER FOR US TO HAVE YOU STAY THERE, TO KEEP A PROPER EYE ON THINGS.

I APPRECIATE THE INVITATION, SATURNYNE, BUT I MUST DECLINE.

I HAVE A COMMITMENT I MUST FULFILL.

LEAVE THAT TO ME.

I'LL HAVE YOU FREE IN NO TIME.



WHATEVER ELSE, I AM A MAN OF HONOR. I WON'T BETRAY MY WORD.





SAGE?

C'MON,
WOMAN,
WHERE ARE
YOU?

FUNNY
THING IS, I
SOMEHOW JUST
KNOW SHE'S
NOT DEAD.

MAKES ME
WISH I COULD
STILL READ
MINDS.

BE
THANKFUL YOU
CAN'T.

SAGE--
ARE YOU ALL
RIGHT?



I
THINK...

...I'VE GONE
QUITE...

...MAD!

ELISABETH--
PLEASE--

--I CAN'T
GO BACK TO
EARTH!

I
WON'T!

--DON'T
SEND ME
BACK--

WHY,
SAGE? WHAT'S
WRONG?

IT'S THE
KNOWLEDGE
INSIDE MY HEAD.
I'M BARELY IN
CONTROL.

IF IT
ESCAPES, IF
THE WRONG
PEOPLE GET
CONTROL...

--NOT
EVEN I CAN TELL THE
CONSEQUENCES.

I NEED TO
BE SOMEWHERE
SAFE.

PLEASE--
TRUST ME--
HELP ME.

IF I
GO BACK,
IT'S NOT
SAFE.

ELISABETH--

--IT'S
TIME FOR THE
MEMORIAL.

I'M NOT
GOING BACK,
BRIAN.

I'M
STAYING WITH
THE EXILES, AND
WITH SAGE.

AFTER
WHAT'S HAPPENED,
THEY BOTH NEED
ALL THE HELP THEY
CAN GET.

AND LET'S FACE IT, THERE ARE
MORE X-MEN THAN XAVIER
KNOWS WHAT TO DO WITH.
HE DOESN'T NEED ME.

I
UNDERSTAND.

NOCTURNE'S
GOING BACK WITH YOU
AS WELL, TO BE WITH
THUNDERBIRD.

ON
THE OTHER HAND,
LONGSHOT IS
COMING WITH US.
TO BE WITH
ALISON.

POOR
WISDOM.

THESE
FAREWELLS
ARE GETTING TO BE
TOO MUCH OF A
HABIT.

AS LONG AS
WE'RE ALIVE,
I FIGURE WE'RE
AHEAD OF THE
GAME.

AND IF WE'RE
AHEAD, LITTLE
BROTHER...

--WE'VE
A DECENT
CHANCE TO
WIN.

THE CRYSTAL PALACE.

IT'S THAT
TIME, MY
LOVE.

EVEN
THE BEST OF
THINGS MUST
COME TO ITS
END.

I
KNOW.

I JUST
WANTED TO
SAY A PROPER
"GOOD-
BYE."

YOU ARE
SUCH A FIBBER,
YOU JUST WANT
TO SEE WHAT HAPPENS
NEXT.

WELL,
THAT TOO.

I FORGIVE
YOU.

THE TIME
HAS COME,
MY DEAR.

I CAN'T
DO THIS, I WANT
YOU BOTH TO
STAY.

WELL, YOU
CAN'T.

I'M
SORRY.





THIS IS THE
WAY A WORLD
ENDS...

...AND WITH
THAT WORLD,
A LEGEND...

...WHO MIGHT
ONCE HAVE BEEN
CONSIDERED A
GOD.

HE LEAVES
AS ONCE HE
ENTERED, WITH
A SMILE.

SETTING ASIDE
WHAT'S COME BEFORE
AND EAGERLY LOOKING
AHEAD TO WHAT
COMES NEXT.

SHEPHERDED
BY THOSE WHO
BOTH LOVE
AND MISS HIM.

SECURE IN THE
KNOWLEDGE THAT
BEHIND HIM SOAR
A PANOPLY OF
HEROES--

--MANY BORN OF
AND SHAPED BY
HIM--

--TO SAFEGUARD
THE COUNTLESS
INNOCENTS...

...WHO SHARE
THE WORLDS AND
DIMENSIONS OF
THE OMNIVERSE.

HARD
AS THE ROAD
AHEAD MAY
BE...

...THEY ALL KNOW
IT RESTS ON FIRM
FOUNDATIONS.

TO DAVE COCKRUM & PATY COCKRUM

COMING SOON!



EXILES #100

ON SALE 12/19/07

EXILES: DAYS OF THEN AND NOW #1

ON SALE 1/02/08



NEW EXILES #1

ON SALE 01/16/08

Enjoy "Die by the Sword"?
Mourning the death of Roma?
Excited for "New Exiles"?

Drop us a line at MondoMarvel@marvel.com and tell us all about it!

Issue 4 of X-Men: Die by the Sword was colored by Rob Ro, as were all issues of this miniseries, not Wilfredo Quintana as was credited. We apologize for the error. — Mark & Jordan



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BY
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SCANNER**

**MINUTEMEN
SCANS**